

What makes people itch?

Scabies:	Scabies are basically little bugs that like to burrow under the skin. They especially like the warm parts of our bodies, such as in between the fingers, under the armpits, and on our genitals. Scabies are easily passed through close, intimate contact (like sex), but can also be passed between family members or roommates who share sheets or clothing. Scabies can be treated with over-the-counter medication, but it's always a good idea to go to the doctor to get checked, especially if you are not sure what's making you itch.
Yeast infections:	Yeast infections are very common, especially for women. Most women will have at least one yeast infection during their lives. Aside from being itchy, yeast infections often cause a discharge (flow) from the vagina that is white and thick like cottage cheese. For most people, yeast infections are simply bothersome. However, they can cause problems for pregnant women. Some women who have had many yeast infections have been told by their doctors to purchase medications to treat their yeast infections if they have any symptoms. But, if you have never had a yeast infection before, it's always a good idea to go to the doctor to be sure since there are many other infections that can cause similar symptoms.
Herpes:	This is a non-curable STD caused by a virus. Herpes causes blisters in the genital areas, which burst after a few days and become painful, red sores. The sores go away after a few days up to a couple of weeks, but can come back. Before a person has an "outbreak" of these blisters, he or she may have a tingling sensation in the genitals, or itching. This is something called "prodrome", and is a sign that a person with herpes is about to have an outbreak. Not everyone with herpes will have these symptoms. If you know you have herpes, and would like some more information about prodrome, talk to your healthcare provider, who can give you more information.
Genital Warts:	Warts are caused by the human papilloma virus, which can be passed from one person to another during sex. When a person has warts, they usually don't hurt. However, they can itch. Since they can bleed easily if irritated, it is important for someone who has genital warts not to scratch them. They can be removed with medication from a doctor, so the first thing to do if you think you have genital warts is to go to a healthcare provider.
Crabs:	Crabs are very similar to head lice, except they like to attach to the hair around the genitals (and they are also known as pubic lice). They get their name because of their shape – they look like little crabs. Just like scabies, crabs are passed from one person to another through close personal contact (like sex). And, despite what you may have heard, it's not easy to get crabs from a toilet seat. Crabs live off of our bodies by biting our skin and feeding off our blood. The irritation from the bites causes itching and redness. If a person with crabs scratches too much, he or she can develop a skin infection. Crabs can be treated with over the counter medications, but it's always a good idea to see a doctor if you think you have crabs.
Allergic Reactions:	Many people have skin that is very sensitive to chemicals in items that we use everyday. Ingredients in soaps, lotions, and powders that we use to make us smell good can often cause irritation or a rash. Some people may also be allergic to latex condoms or the ingredient used in some lubricants and condoms called non-oxynol 9. If you have itching or irritation in your genitals and are not sure why, talk to a healthcare provider. It's also a good idea to avoid using products such as perfumed soaps or lotions on the skin on and around your genitals.